

guide informs us that he hears a trampling of horses in the distance. Ave Maria! A cold perspiration came over me. Decidedly they approached, but rather an uproarious crew. We drew up out of pure fear, and I had my purse ready. The band turned out to be a company of actors travelling to Cordova. There they were, dresses and decorations, scenery and machinery, all on mules and donkeys, for there are no roads in this country. The singers rehearsing an opera; the principal tragedian riding on an ass; and the buffo, most serious, looking as grave as night, with a cigar, and in greater agitation than them all. Then there were women in side-saddles, like sedans, and whole panniers of children, some of the former chanting an *ave*, while their waists (saving your presence, but it is a rich trait) were in more than one instance encircled by the brawny arm of a more robust devotee. All this irresistibly reminded me of Cervantes. We proceed and meet a caravan (*corsario* they call it, but I spell from sound) of armed merchants, who challenged us, with a regular piquet, and I nearly got shot for not answering in time, being somewhat before my guide. Then come two travelling friars who give us their blessing, and then we lose our way. We wander about all night, dawn breaks, and we stumble on some peasants sleeping in the field amid their harvest. We learn that we cannot regain our road, and, utterly wearied, we finally sink to sound sleep with our pack-saddles for our pillows.¹

At Granada Disraeli was of course delighted with the Alhambra, which he placed 'with the Parthenon, the Pantheon, and York Minster.'

To Isaac D'Israeli.

The Saracenic architecture is the most inventive and fanciful, but at the same time the most fitting and the most delicate that can be conceived. There would be no doubt about its title to be considered among the first inventions of men, if it were better known. It is only to be found in any degree of perfection in Spain. When a man sneers at the Saracenic, ask him what he has seen. Perhaps a barbarous though picturesque building, called the Ducal Palace, at Venice! What should we think of a man who decided on the buildings of Agrippa by the architecture of Justinian, or judged

i *Ibid.*, pp. 23-5.